

XO



#4

xo #4, “neighbors”

story & words:

Brian John Mitchell

artwork:

Melissa Spence Gardner



I'm coming home from  
the grocery store...



...when I hear them  
arguing in the apart-  
ment parking lot.



It's the girl who lives  
upstairs & across the  
hall from me.



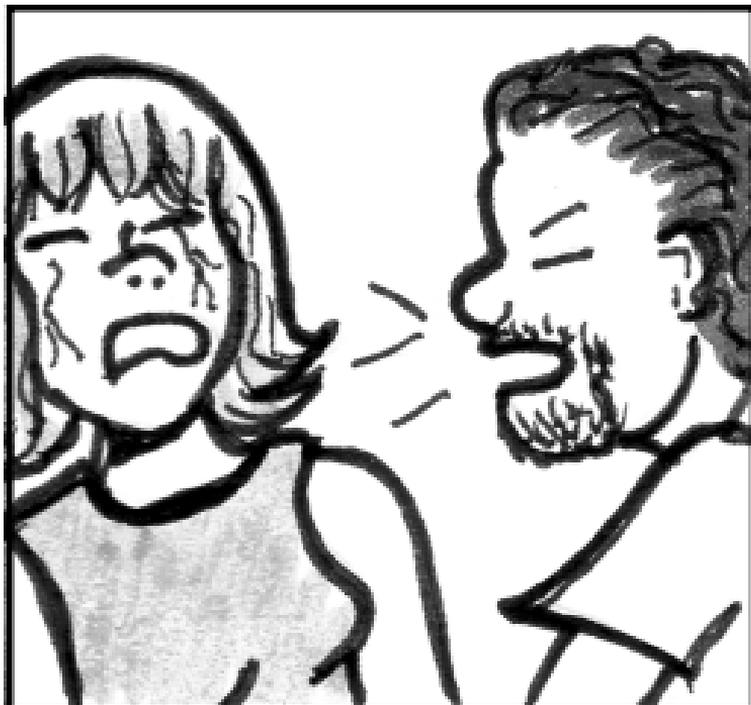
She's a nice girl that  
always has a smile.



Not that I ever really talk to her or anything, but she seems like a good person.



This boyfriend of hers  
on the other hand is a  
deadbeat & a jackass.



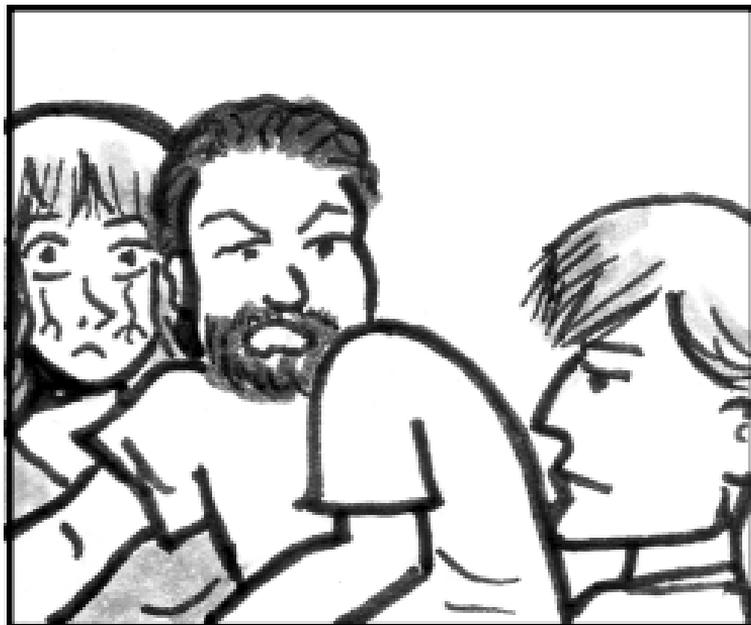
He's yelling at her &  
she's crying.



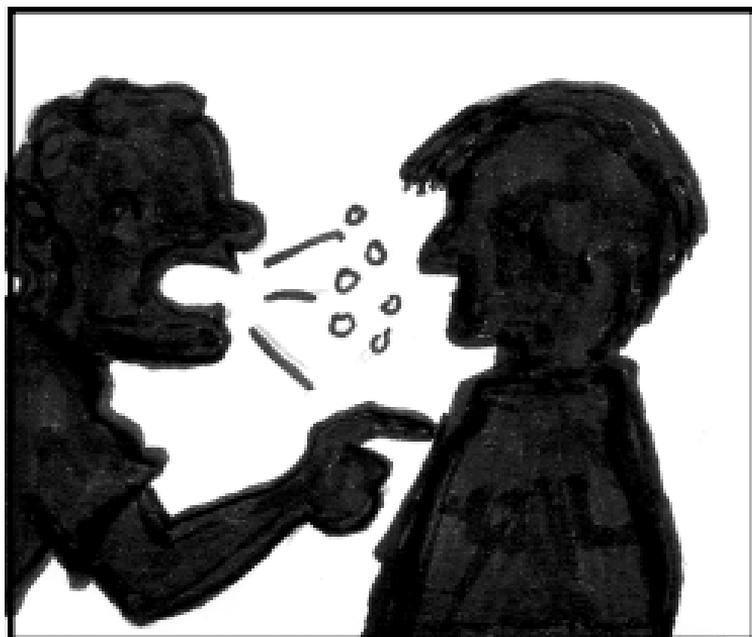
I really can't stand  
emotionally based  
violence towards  
women.



I walk up to them & ask the girl if she wants the guy to leave.



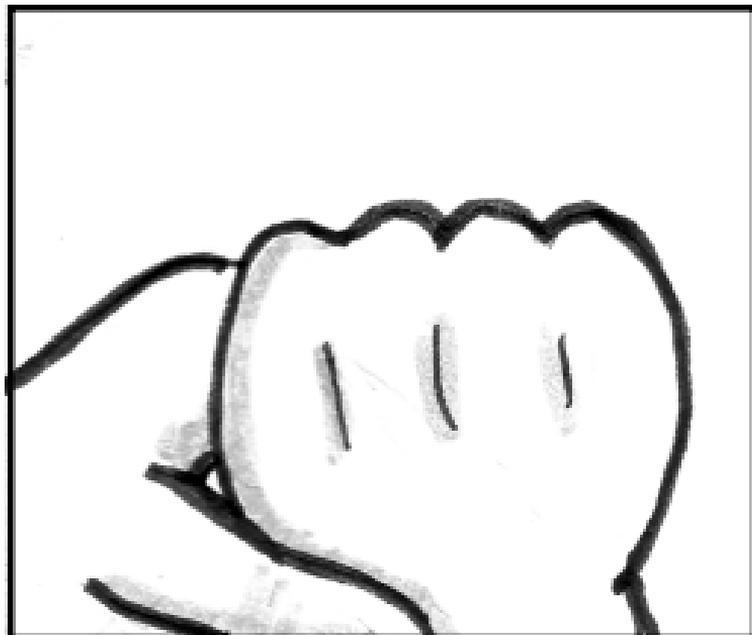
The guy tells me to  
mind my own busi-  
ness...



...& pushes me in the chest with his right index finger.



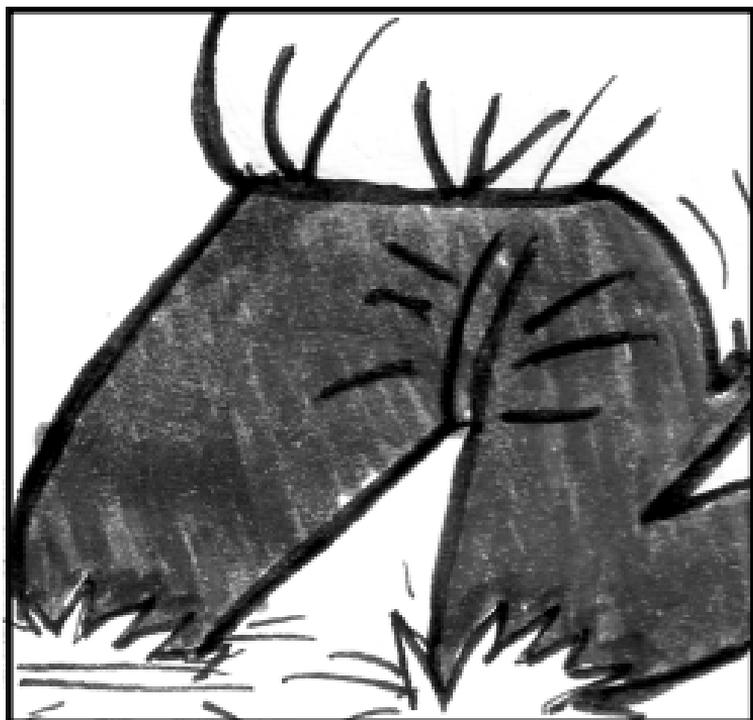
The guy is drunk.



I grab his finger being careful not to actually break it.



I twist his arm around  
his back...



...& get him on his  
knees.



I look at the girl & she  
has a black eye.

Why don't you just drive home?      Fuck you!

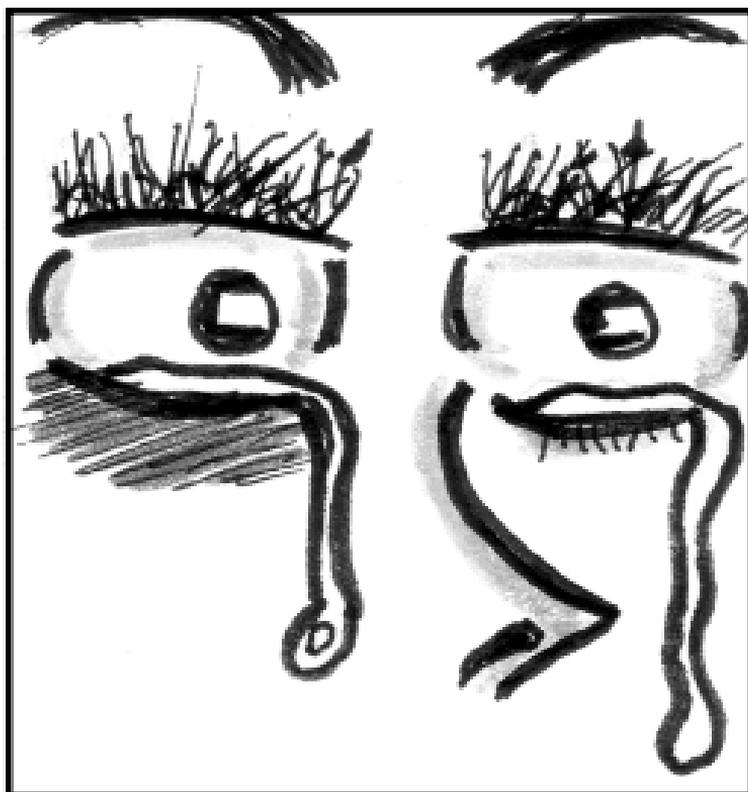




I snap his finger & he starts yelling at the girl.

Fuck you bitch! This is over! You'll never see me again!





The girl is crying...



...but she just turns  
around & walks away.



I let the guy go.



He takes a swing at  
me & I punch him in  
the face.



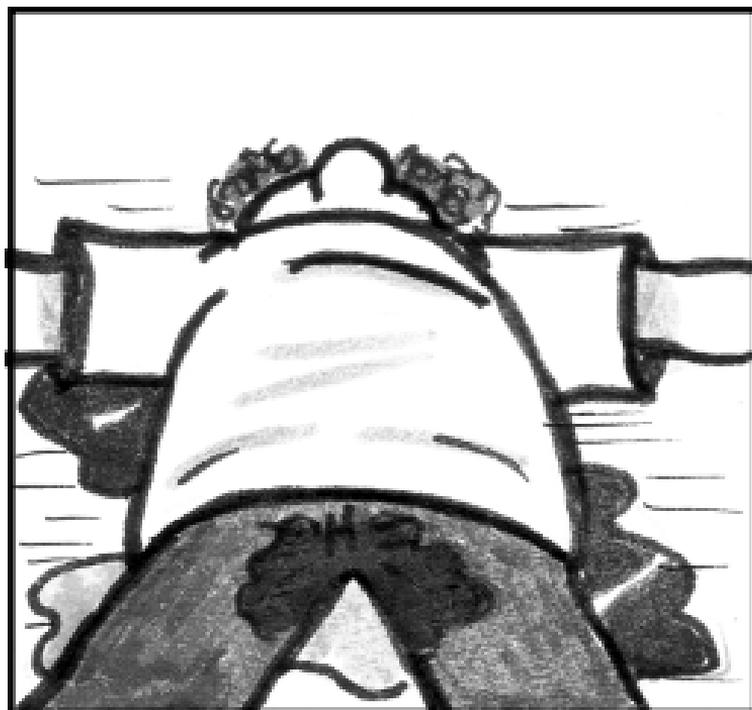
He falls down in the parking lot.



I go into my apartment  
& put my groceries  
away.



I go back out & the guy  
is still lying on the  
asphalt...



...in a puddle of his  
own piss & blood.



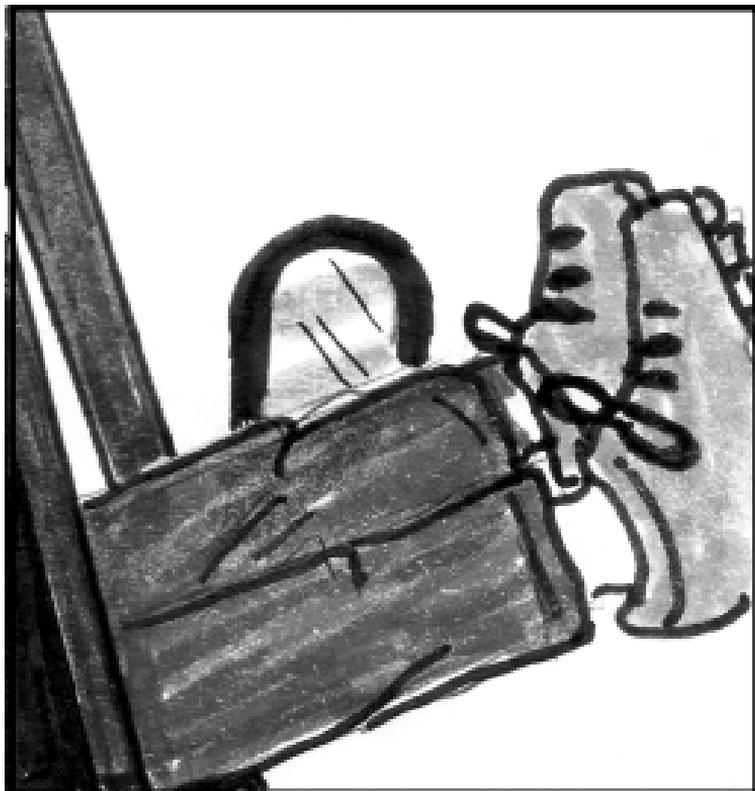
I guess I hit him a  
little too hard.



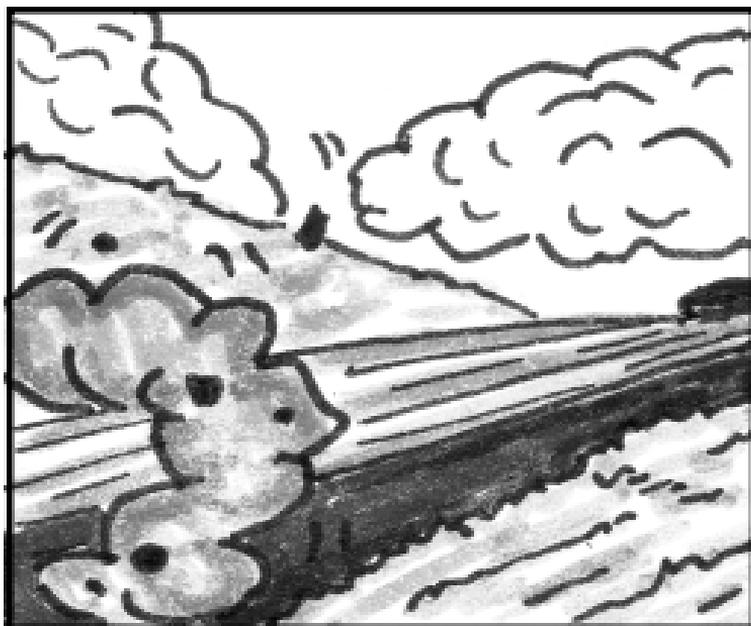
I pull some keys out  
of his pocket...



...& push the little  
button to tell me  
which car is his...



...& put him into the car.



I drive the car onto the highway two miles away.



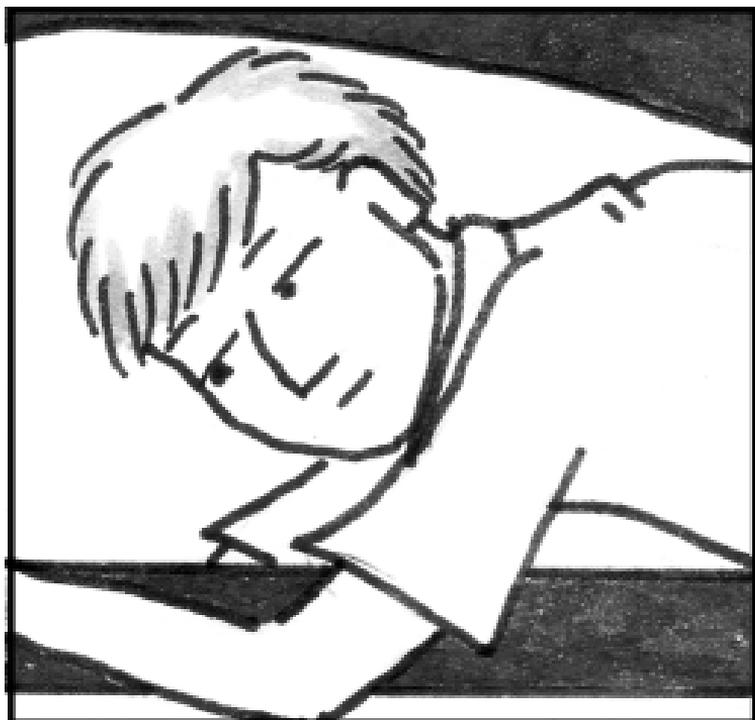
I set the cruise control  
at 60.



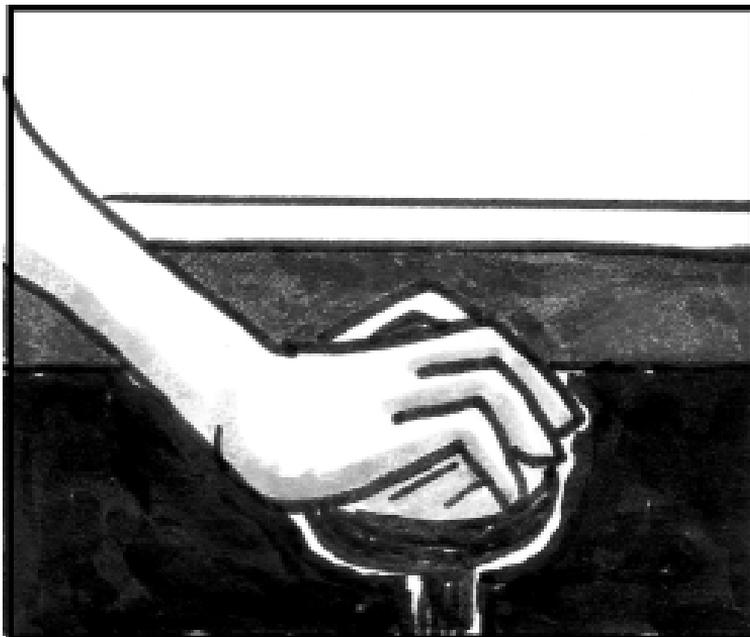
I pull off the road at a point where there's a bridge over a dried up gully.



I put the guy into the  
driver's seat...



...leaving his seatbelt  
off...



...shift the car into  
drive & turn the cruise  
control back on...



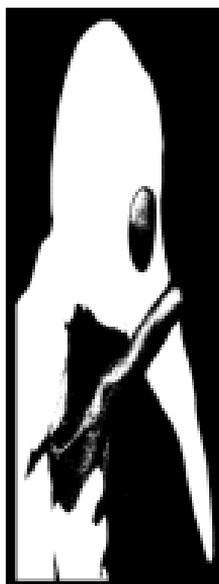
...& walk home.



Crap, now I'm going to  
have to move.



Sometimes I should  
mind my own  
business.



Silber Media  
po box 18062  
raleigh, nc 27619  
[www.silbermedia.com/xo](http://www.silbermedia.com/xo)